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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 09 MUSCAT 000253

SIPDIS  
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (FORMATTING)

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SUBJECT: EMBASSY MUSCAT INPUT TO THE 2009 TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS  
(TIP) REPORT

REF: 08 SECSTATE 132759

MUSCAT 00000253 001.2 OF 009

1. (SBU) This report covers anti-trafficking efforts by the Government of Oman (GOO) from April 2008 to March 2009. Paragraph three begins text. Compiling the report required 48 hours at the FS-04 level, 3 hours at the FSN-09 level, 6 hours at the FS-02 level, 3 hours at the FS-01 level, and 3 hours at the FS-0C level.

12. (SBU) Embassy formally requested information from the government of Oman for the 2009 TIP report. The GOO has promised to provide this information, but has not done so at this time. Post will send an update as soon as it receives a reply from the government. Following is a response to refel questions (included for context).

13. (SBU) PARAGRAPH 23 - THE COUNTRY'S TIP SITUATION:

A. What is (are) the source(s) of available information on trafficking in persons? What plans are in place (if any) to undertake further documentation of human trafficking? How reliable are these sources?

--The government of Oman established an anti-TIP committee in November 2008 and one of its listed responsibilities is to report statistics on trafficking; however, it has not yet issued its first report.

--Embassies of labor-exporting countries provide most of the currently available information on potential trafficking cases. This information is primarily based on first-hand experiences of housemaids and other low-skilled workers who have sought shelter in embassy-sponsored safe houses or other embassy services, including assistance with resolving contract disputes or their immigration status. Individual stories are only reliable accounts of one person's experience. Due to the lack of comprehensive quantitative data, it is difficult to ascertain the size of the potential trafficking problem in Oman.

B. Is the country a country of origin, transit, and/or destination for internationally trafficked men, women, or children? Does trafficking occur within the country's borders? If so, does internal trafficking occur in territory outside of the government's control (e.g. in a civil war situation)? To where are people trafficked? For what purposes are they trafficked? Provide, where possible, numbers or estimates for each group of trafficking victims. Have there been any changes in the TIP situation since the last TIP Report (e.g. changes in destinations)?

--Oman is a destination and transit country for male and female workers from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Indonesia.

--Post has no reliable information suggesting a domestic trafficking problem.

--Migrant workers are brought primarily to the capital area of Muscat, but also to other areas of Oman where additional labor is needed. Oman also serves as a transit country for laborers seeking employment in the UAE.

--Unskilled workers come to Oman to serve as low cost labor in both private industry and private homes. Most potential trafficking victims are not trafficked into the country, but may find themselves in a trafficking situation after they arrive. There is limited prostitution in Oman; many prostitution victims are recruited in-country from unskilled foreign laborers.

--It is not possible to provide numbers or estimates for each group.

--There have been no changes in countries of origin or destination since the last TIP report.

C. What kind of conditions are the victims trafficked into?

--Potential trafficking victims are employed as low-skilled laborers in Oman's construction, agricultural, and service sectors where some laborers complain of abuse, specifically accusing their employers of altering their contracts and illegally deducting or withholding part of their pay. Some arrive in country with debt to recruitment agencies in their home countries that often exceeds 400 OR (USD 1,040) at 20-25% interest. Employers almost always retain workers' passports.

--Housemaids work in private homes with little to no oversight from the government or other bodies. Some housemaids make allegations of non-payment of salary, long hours without food or rest, and verbal, physical or sexual abuse. A relatively small

number of housemaids (< 1%) run away and arrive at their respective embassies' safe houses without their passports or residency (labor) cards, which they claim their sponsors withheld. Labor attaches at the Philippine, Sri Lanka and Indian Embassies in Muscat (protect) each report that they shelter an average of 15-20 runaway maids per month in their embassy-sponsored safe houses.

--Some women working as prostitutes may be victims of sexual exploitation and/or trafficking. While prostitution remains a relatively small problem and is illegal in

MUSCAT 00000253 002.2 OF 009

Oman, commercial sexual transactions allegedly occur in hotels, bars, brothels, and in some massage parlors and health clubs. Contacts state that the sex trade in Oman mostly involves women from China, India, Morocco, Eastern Europe and South Asia.

**1D. Vulnerability to TIP:** Are certain groups of persons more at risk of being trafficked (e.g., women and children, boys versus girls, certain ethnic groups, refugees, IDPs, etc.)?

--Men and women are vulnerable to different types of trafficking. Men are more vulnerable to forced labor situations as unskilled laborers; women are more vulnerable to abuse as housemaids.

**1E. Traffickers and Their Methods:** Who are the traffickers/exploiters? Are they independent business people? Small or family-based crime groups? Large international organized crime syndicates? What methods are used to approach victims? For example, are they offered lucrative jobs, sold by their families, or approached by friends of friends? What methods are used to move the victims (e.g., are false documents being used?). Are employment, travel, and tourism agencies or marriage brokers involved with or fronting for traffickers or crime groups to traffic individuals?

--The primary agents of possible trafficking to Oman are unscrupulous labor recruitment agencies in sending countries and their sub-agents at the community level. Many of these agencies may lure some workers into conditions of trafficking by providing them with false contracts for employment, either with fictitious employers or at fake wage rates; charging workers high recruitment fees at usurious rates of interest; and urging workers to enter Oman on tourist visas, fraudulently proposing this as the easiest and cheapest way to work in Oman.

--Illegal immigrants may also become trafficking victims in Oman. Most illegal immigrants intend to transit Oman for work in the United Arab Emirates (UAE); some stay and find work in Oman as undocumented laborers. Some of these illegal immigrants may have been victims of trafficking by networks of recruitment agencies and other entities in South Asia, the UAE, Oman and Iran. Workers from as far away as Bangladesh have entered Oman via Pakistan or Iran, paying hundreds of dollars to agents along the way to facilitate border crossings and to transit the Gulf of Oman. Contacts claim that some of these workers were promised work in Oman or the UAE, and in some cases told that Oman actually was the UAE, before being left along Oman's Batinah coast without documentation or employment contacts.

--There are reports of an active black market for labor in which low-skilled workers in Oman's construction sector, for instance, can earn as much as five times their contracted daily wage, through temporary work with employers other than their original sponsor. Members of low-skilled workers' own ethnic and national communities may prey upon them, charging the workers high fees to arrange for alternative employment in the black market. Despite the promise of increased earnings, undocumented workers can become vulnerable to abuse and exploitation based on their illegal status.

--Some female immigrants are lured into prostitution, generally by nationals of their own countries, with promises of higher wages than they make as housemaids or as other service workers. Their participation in illegal prostitution provides an opportunity for exploitation.

#### **14. (SBU) PARAGRAPH 24 - SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-TIP EFFORTS**

**1A.** Does the government acknowledge that trafficking is a problem in the country? If not, why not?

--Some members of the government privately admit that there may be a problem with trafficking, although very few government members admit this publicly. However, the passing of comprehensive TIP legislation and the creation of an anti-TIP committee is defacto acknowledgement by the government that there is a potential problem.

--The government does not always acknowledge TIP due to a variety of reasons including a lack of understanding of the complex definition of trafficking (which is exacerbated by the translation of the term into Arabic). Further, the government does not want to be seen as being unduly influenced by U.S. pressure and, therefore, may limit or slow its efforts to address the problem the more the USG publicly focuses attention on it.

**1B.** Which government agencies are involved in anti-trafficking efforts and which agency, if any, has the lead?

--Oman's new anti-TIP law established a national anti-trafficking committee headed by an official of ministerial rank. The committee will likely include officials at the rank of Undersecretary or similar level from the ministries of Manpower, Justice, Social Development, Health, Finance, and Legal Affairs, as well as from the Royal Oman Police (ROP) and the Public Prosecutor.

MUSCAT 00000253 003.2 OF 009

Once established, the committee will have a broad range of responsibilities including developing a comprehensive program for combating trafficking, setting up care and rehabilitation programs for victims, and collecting and reporting statistics.

--The Ministry of Manpower (MOM), which is responsible for the care and development of Oman's private sector workforce, independently has taken concrete actions to improve workplace conditions and worker protections (as outlined elsewhere in this report).

**1C.** What are the limitations on the government's ability to address this problem in practice? For example, is funding for police or other institutions inadequate? Is overall corruption a problem? Does the government lack the resources to aid victims?

--At present, one of the biggest limitations on government action is the lack of technical expertise and staffing in front-line agencies, such

as the MOM and ROP, necessary to screen and identify potential trafficking victims from among the thousands of worker complaints and illegal immigrants that each agency processes annually. The government is taking steps to address this deficiency (see Paragraph 25, F response).

--Government corruption does not limit the government's ability to address trafficking in practice.

--Funding for both police and victim aid is available.

1D. To what extent does the government systematically monitor its anti-trafficking efforts (on all fronts - prosecution, victim protection, and prevention) and periodically make available, publicly or privately and directly or through regional/international organizations, its assessments of these anti-trafficking efforts?

--The new bNational Committee for Combating Trafficking in Personsb is tasked with:

1) Setting up, through coordination with concerned parties, an action plan for combating human trafficking; and

2) Drafting periodic reports on human trafficking based on court statistics, verdicts issued against perpetrators, results of the practical enf

#### 15. (SBU) PARAGRAPH 25 - INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF TRAFFICKERS

1A. Existing Laws against TIP: Does the country have a law or laws specifically prohibiting trafficking in persons -- both for sexual exploitation and labor? If so, please specifically cite the name of the law(s) and its date of enactment and provide the exact language [actual copies preferable] of the TIP provisions. Please provide a full inventory of trafficking laws, including non-criminal statutes that allow for civil penalties against alleged trafficking crimes (e.g., civil forfeiture laws and laws against illegal debt). Does the law(s) cover both internal and transnational forms of trafficking? If not, under what other laws can traffickers be prosecuted? For example, are there laws against slavery or the exploitation of prostitution by means of force, fraud, or coercion? Are these other laws being used in trafficking cases?

--Yes. bRoyal Decree 126/2008: Promulgating the Law Combating Trafficking in Personsb issued on November 23, 2008. Copy of both the Arabic and English version of the law was sent to G/TIP via NEA/ARP.

--The law covers both internal and transnational trafficking, with stiffer penalties for transnational crime. In addition, it established a n capable of combating transnational human trafficking crimes.

--This law defines trafficking as recruiting, transporting, harboring or receiving a person by instruments of coercion, threat, deceit, blackmail, or misuse of power, influence or use of authority over that individual, or by any other illegal instrument, either directly or indirectly; or recruiting, harboring or receiving a child (defined as a person below 18 years of age) even without the use of any of those instruments for the purpose of exploitation, which is defined to include prostitution, sexual assault, servitude, forced labor, enslavement, quasi-slavery practices, subjugation, or illegal detachment of organs.

--The consent of the victim shall not be a determining factor if any of the instruments listed above was used, or the victim was a child, or the victim was in circumstances where it was not possible to determine his/her consent.

--The new anti-TIP law prescribes imprisonment of 3 -7 years and a find of 5,000 Omani Rials (US\$13,000) to 100,000 OR (\$260,000). The law also specifies that no ruling may be issued to stay a punishment against a convict in a human trafficking crime and that it is not possible to go below the minimum punishment prescribed. The penalty increases to 7-15 years

MUSCAT 00000253 004.2 OF 009

in prison and 10,000 RO (US\$26,000) b" 100,000 OR (US\$260,000) if the victim was a child or a person with special needs, the perpetrator carried a weapon, the crime was committed by more than one person, the perpetrator was a close family member, the crime was committed by a gang or gang member, the perpetrator was a public sector employee, the crime was transnational, or if the victim suffered permanent psychological or physical illness or injury.

--Penalties are also prescribed for anyone who is aware of the crime of trafficking and does not report it, or for anyone who provides shelter or other assistance in aiding a traffickerbs escape from justice.

1B. Punishment of Sex Trafficking Offenses: What are the prescribed and imposed penalties for trafficking people for sexual exploitation?

--The anti-TIP law covers sexual exploitation that meets the definition of trafficking, thus the penalties outlined in section A apply here as well.

1C. Punishment of Labor Trafficking Offenses: What are the prescribed and imposed penalties for trafficking for labor exploitation, such as forced or bonded labor? If your country is a source country for labor migrants, do the government's laws provide for criminal punishment -- i.e. jail time -- for labor recruiters who engage in recruitment of workers using knowingly fraudulent or deceptive offers with the purpose of subjecting workers to trafficking in the destination country? If your country is a destination for labor migrants, are there laws punishing employers or labor agents who confiscate workers' passports or travel documents for the purpose of trafficking, switch contracts without the worker's consent as a means to keep the worker in a state of service, or withhold payment of salaries as means of keeping the worker in a state of service?

--The anti-TIP law covers labor exploitation that meets the definition of trafficking, thus the penalties outlined in section A apply here as well.

--Oman is not a source country for labor migrants.

--The Ministry of Manpower issued a legally-enforceable administrative circular in 2006 that prohibits employers from withholding workers' passports. The circular affirms existing Omani legal practice in which courts have ruled in favor of workers who lodged complaints against their employers to retrieve their passports. The circular does not currently assign penalties to employers who violate the prohibition. Article 20 of the 2003 Labor Law prohibits employers and recruitment agencies from charging workers for employment services or from bringing in foreign workers without a license, and assigns a penalty of up to one month in prison and 200 OR (USD 520) for these actions.

1D. What are the prescribed penalties for rape or forcible sexual assault?

--The law criminalizes rape with penalties of up to 15 years in prison.

¶E. Law Enforcement Statistics: Did the government prosecute any cases against human trafficking offenders during the reporting period? If so, provide numbers of investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences imposed, including details on plea bargains and fines, if relevant and available. Please note the number of convicted traffickers who received suspended sentences and the number who received only a fine as punishment. Please indicate which laws were used to investigate, prosecute, convict, and sentence traffickers. Also, if possible, please disaggregate numbers of cases by type of TIP (labor vs. commercial sexual exploitation) and victims (children under 18 years of age vs. adults). If in a labor source country, did the government criminally prosecute labor recruiters who recruit workers using knowingly fraudulent or deceptive offers or by imposing fees or commissions for the purpose of subjecting the worker to debt bondage? Did the government in a labor destination country criminally prosecute employers or labor agents who confiscate workers' passports/travel documents for the purpose of trafficking, switch contracts or terms of employment without the worker's consent to keep workers in a state of service, use physical or sexual abuse or the threat of such abuse to keep workers in a state of service, or withhold payment of salaries as a means to keep workers in a state of service? What were the actual punishments imposed on persons convicted of these offenses? Are the traffickers serving the time sentenced? If not, why not?

--The government of Oman is attempting to compile statistics in response to these questions but has not provided the information at this time.

--The government of Oman has brought trafficking charges under its new anti-TIP law. The case was summarily announced in local press on March 2; additional information was made available on March 16. According to local media, young women who came to Oman to work as

MUSCAT 00000253 005.2 OF 009

waitresses, beauticians or nannies were approached by a man who recruited them into his prostitution ring. The reports indicate that the primary offender is an "Arab national" and that there are Omanis among the accused. At least one of the charged Omanis falls within the public servant clause in Oman's anti-TIP legislation, which carries more severe penalties. Updates on this case will be provided as more information becomes available.

¶F. Does the government provide any specialized training for government officials in how to recognize, investigate, and prosecute instances of trafficking? Specify whether NGOs, international organizations, and/or the USG provide specialized training for host government officials.

--Government officials have received training on how to detect and investigate instances of trafficking. The International Labor Organization (ILO) trained over 100 MOM labor inspectors on how to recognize the signs of trafficking during inspection of private companies.

¶G. Does the government cooperate with other governments in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases? If possible, provide the number of cooperative international investigations on trafficking during the reporting period.

--The government of Oman signed an MOU in 2008 with the government of India regarding the treatment of expatriate workers in Oman. Oman has also worked with sending countries to identify and take action against recruitment agencies involved in trafficking.

¶H. Does the government extradite persons who are charged with trafficking in other countries? If so, please provide the number of traffickers extradited during the reporting period, and the number of trafficking extraditions pending. In particular, please report on any pending or concluded extraditions of trafficking offenders to the United States.

--There have been no reported cases of a third country requesting extradition of an Omani citizen for trafficking related charges. Article 36 of Oman's Basic Law stipulates that criminals, including Omani citizens, may be extradited subject to international laws and agreements, but only in cases in which Oman has signed a bilateral extradition treaty with the country in question. There were no requested extraditions of alleged trafficking offenders to the U.S.

¶I. Is there evidence of government involvement in or tolerance of trafficking, on a local or institutional level? If so, please explain in detail.

--There is no evidence of official government involvement in, or tolerance of, trafficking on any level. However, at least one of the Omanis charged in the first case under the anti-trafficking law meets the definition of public servant. No further information is available at this time.

¶J. If government officials are involved in trafficking, what steps has the government taken to end such participation? Please indicate the number of government officials investigated and prosecuted for involvement in trafficking or trafficking-related corruption during the reporting period. Have any been convicted? What sentence(s) was imposed? Please specify if officials received suspended sentences, or were given a fine, fired, or reassigned to another position within the government as punishment. Please indicate the number of convicted officials that received suspended sentences or received only a fine as punishment.

--The government has charged one public servant in a trafficking in persons case. No further information is available at this time.

¶K. Is prostitution legalized or decriminalized? Specifically, are the activities of the prostitute criminalized? Are the activities of the brothel owner/operator, clients, pimps, and enforcers criminalized? Are these laws enforced? If prostitution is legal and regulated, what is the legal minimum age for this activity? Note that in countries with federalist systems, prostitution laws may be under state or local jurisdiction and may differ among jurisdictions.

--The Penal Code criminalizes most aspects of prostitution, including the actions of pimps and facilitators of the sex trade. Article 220 ascribes a penalty of three to five years in prison against "anyone who incites, by coercion or menace, a person to commit debauchery or prostitution." The punishment is not less than five years if the victim is under the age of 18. Article 221 further criminalizes the actions of pimps by assigning a punishment of three

months to three years in prison and a fine of 20 to 100 OR (USD 52-260) for "anyone whose living is based, in whole or in part, on a third party's earnings from debauchery or prostitution, either under his protection or influence." Article 222 assigns the same penalty to the owners or managers of a brothel. Article 222 criminalizes the act of prostitution and prescribes a penalty of three months to two

MUSCAT 00000253 006.2 OF 009

years for the offense. Unless the government could prove incitement to commit prostitution under Article 220, the male client could only be charged as a secondary participant to prostitution under Article 95 and would face one-sixth to one-third of the woman's sentence. These laws are enforced.

1L. For countries that contribute troops to international peacekeeping efforts, please indicate whether the government vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted and sentenced nationals of the country deployed abroad as part of a peacekeeping or other similar mission who engaged in or facilitated severe forms of trafficking or who exploited victims of such trafficking.

--Oman does not contribute troops to international peacekeeping efforts.

1M. If the country has an identified problem of child sex tourists coming to the country, what are the countries of origin for sex tourists? How many foreign pedophiles did the government prosecute or deport/extradite to their country of origin? If your host country's nationals are perpetrators of child sex tourism, do the country's child sexual abuse laws have extraterritorial coverage (similar to the U.S. PROTECT Act) to allow the prosecution of suspected sex tourists for crimes committed abroad? If so, how many of the country's nationals were prosecuted and/or convicted during the reporting period under the extraterritorial provision(s) for traveling to other countries to engage in child sex tourism?

--Post has no information indicating that Oman is either a source or destination country for child sex tourism.

#### 16. (SBU) PARAGRAPH 26 - PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS

1A. What kind of protection is the government able under existing law to provide for victims and witnesses? Does it provide these protections in practice?

--Under Article 5 of the new anti-TIP law, the government will be responsible for explaining the victim's legal rights in a language he/she can understand while allowing the victim the opportunity to provide an explanation of his/her status. The law also specifies that the government will provide security protection to the victim or witness whenever deemed necessary.

--Article 13 provides penalties of 3-5 years imprisonment for any person found guilty of using force, threatening, or promising a reward in order to prevent a person from testifying, or presenting evidence, or in order to coerce a person into presenting a false statement, or presenting incorrect evidence related to a human trafficking crime before the concerned authorities.

1B. Does the country have victim care facilities (shelters or drop-in centers) which are accessible to trafficking victims? Do foreign victims have the same access to care as domestic trafficking victims? Where are child victims placed (e.g., in shelters, foster care, or juvenile justice detention centers)? Does the country have specialized care for adults in addition to children? Does the country have specialized care for male victims as well as female? Does the country have specialized facilities dedicated to helping victims of trafficking? Are these facilities operated by the government or by NGOs? What is the funding source of these facilities? Please estimate the amount the government spent (in U.S. dollar equivalent) on these specialized facilities dedicated to helping trafficking victims during the reporting period.

--The anti-TIP law specifies in Article 5 that victims must be taken to special lodging b" either medical or psychological rehabilitation centers, a shelter or "accommodation center." The government of Oman is in the process of establishing these facilities.

--The anti-TIP committee is tasked with setting up care and rehabilitation programs for victims to enable them to be quickly reinstated into the community.

--Article 19 of the same law tasks the Public Prosecution with inspecting the places of accommodation for victims of trafficking in order to ensure that they are maintained within the specifications of the law.

--Embassies of labor exporting countries provide services through embassy-sponsored safe houses, and through the offices of their labor attaches, to workers and domestic employees who may be victims of trafficking. Private individuals and groups also provide support and accommodations. Omani authorities are aware of these embassy-supported and private activities. These safe houses do not have official government sanction, however, and officials in these embassies report that the MOM has requested that they immediately refer all cases of their nationals seeking refuge to the MOM for investigation and resolution. Embassy contacts report that these resolutions are generally acceptable to the complainants.

1C. Does the government provide trafficking victims with access to legal, medical and psychological services? If so, please

MUSCAT 00000253 007.2 OF 009

specify the kind of assistance provided. Does the government provide funding or other forms of support to foreign or domestic NGOs and/or international organizations for providing these services to trafficking victims? Please explain and provide any funding amounts in U.S. dollar equivalent. If assistance provided was in-kind, please specify exact assistance. Please specify if funding for assistance comes from a federal budget or from regional or local governments.

--The anti-TIP law specifies in Article 5 that victims must be taken to special lodging b" either medical or psychological rehabilitation centers, a shelter or "accommodation center." The government of Oman is in the process of establishing these facilities which the central government will fund.

1D. Does the government assist foreign trafficking victims, for example, by providing temporary to permanent residency status, or other relief



from deportation? If so, please explain.

--Article 5, Section D of the new law that if the investigation or trial finds cause, and it is ordered by Public Prosecution or the Court, the victim or witness may be permitted to stay in Oman on a case-by-case basis.

--If an employer is found in violation of labor law (whether the violation is found to be trafficking or a lesser offense) and the immigrant employee does not want to continue working for that employer, he/she may stay in Oman if he/she finds a new sponsor. The MoM allows up to one month for the employee to locate a new sponsor.

1E. Does the government provide longer-term shelter or housing benefits to victims or other resources to aid the victims in rebuilding their lives?

--The anti-TIP committee is tasked with setting up care and rehabilitation programs for victims to enable them to be quickly reinstated into the community.

1F. Does the government have a referral process to transfer victims detained, arrested or placed in protective custody by law enforcement authorities to institutions that provide short- or long-term care (either government or NGO-run)?

--The government does not refer anyone to embassy-run shelters.

1G. What is the total number of trafficking victims identified during the reporting period? Of these, how many victims were referred to care facilities for assistance by law enforcement authorities during the reporting period? By social services officials? What is the number of victims assisted by government-funded assistance programs and those not funded by the government during the reporting period?

--There is no official information available regarding confirmed trafficking cases in Oman. However, there is anecdotal data from source country embassies here that demonstrates the limited scope of potential trafficking victims. Of the 60,000 - 90,000 housemaids in Oman, less than 60 each month go to embassy sponsored safe-houses alleging any type of mistreatment. Of the estimated 500,000-plus Indian workers in Oman, only 50-60 on average go each month to an open house at the Indian embassy, which is held to assist them with any type of labor or immigration issue. Of these, more than 1/2 have overstayed their visa or in some other way violated Omani labor law and are seeking help to pay their fines and be repatriated.

1H. Do the government's law enforcement, immigration, and social services personnel have a formal system of proactively identifying victims of trafficking among high-risk persons with whom they come in contact (e.g., foreign persons arrested for prostitution or immigration violations)? For countries with legalized prostitution, does the government have a mechanism for screening for trafficking victims among persons involved in the legal/regulated commercial sex trade?

--Ministry of Manpower representatives interview all employees who are detained for running away from their sponsors to determine if there was any violation of labor law, including trafficking.

--Oman has developed a mechanism for identifying trafficking victims among immigrant workers at private companies, based on input and training from the ILO. This process incorporates reviewing bank reports, employment contracts and salary slips, and speaking privately with randomly selected individual workers at each site.

--Prostitution is illegal in Oman.

1I. Are the rights of victims respected? Are trafficking victims detained or jailed? If so, for how long? Are victims fined? Are victims prosecuted for violations of other laws, such as those governing immigration or prc

--Article 5 of the new anti-trafficking law specifies that the government must make the victim understand his/her legal rights in a language understandable to him/her, allow the victim to explain his/her status, and refer the victim (as needed) to a medical or

MUSCAT 00000253 008.2 OF 009

psychological rehabilitation center, shelter or accommodations center.

1J. Does the government encourage victims to assist in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking? How many victims assisted in the investigation and prosecution of traffickers during the reporting period? May victims file civil suits or seek legal action against traffickers? Does anyone impede victim access to such legal redress? If a victim is a material witness in a court case against a former employer, is the victim permitted to obtain other employment or to leave the country pending trial proceedings? Are there means by which a victim may obtain restitution?

--The government encourages potential TIP victims to assist in the investigation and prosecution of crimes against them.

--Article 17 of the new anti-TIP law states that a victim shall be exempted from paying the fees of the civil suit he/she files to claim compensation for the damages resulting from being abused in a human trafficking crime.

1K. Does the government provide any specialized training for government officials in identifying trafficking victims and in the provision of assistance to trafficked victims, including the special needs of trafficked children? Does the government provide training on protections and assistance to its embassies and consulates in foreign countries that are destination or transit countries? What is the number of trafficking victims assisted by the host country's embassies or consulates abroad during the reporting period? Please explain the type of assistance provided (travel documents, referrals to assistance, payment for transportation home).

--There have been no reported cases of Omani nationals living outside the country who became victims of trafficking. Post is not aware if the government provides its officials in domestic agencies/ministries or foreign embassies with special training or instructions on how to identify, serve, or protect potential trafficking victims.

1L. Does the government provide assistance, such as medical aid, shelter, or financial help, to its nationals who are repatriated as victims of

trafficking?

--There is no evidence that Omani nationals have ever been repatriated as victims of trafficking.

1M. Which international organizations or NGOs, if any, work with trafficking victims? What type of services do they provide? What sort of cooperation do they receive from local authorities?

--Local churches and Hindu temples work with allegedly mistreated domestic workers who may be trafficking victims in embassy-sponsored shelters, providing supplies and services for the women there. A charity, registered as a religious organization, provides funding for the matron at the Indian Embassy's shelter (please protect).

17. (SBU) PARAGRAPH b" 27 PREVENTION

1A. Did the government conduct anti-trafficking information or education campaigns during the reporting period? If so, briefly describe the campaign(s), including their objectives and effectiveness. Please provide the number of people reached by such awareness efforts, if available. Do these campaigns target potential trafficking victims and/or the demand for trafficking (e.g. "clients" of prostitutes or beneficiaries of forced labor)? (Note: This can be an especially noteworthy effort where prostitution is legal. End Note.)

-- Ministry of Manpower (MoM) representatives traveled throughout the country to conduct seminars for workers in private industry to outline the rights of workers. This included information on laws concerning salary payment, trade unions and trafficking related practices such as the confiscation of passports and identification cards.

--The MoM published a brochure in thirteen languages titled "Guidelines for Foreign Manpower in the Sultanate of Oman" which is used to educate low-skilled foreign workers. The brochure highlights rights and services to which all workers are legally entitled, including: health and personal injury insurance; adequate compensation for overtime work; and the right to strike in accordance with Omani law. The brochure lists the MoM's 24-hour labor abuse hotline number and instructs workers to contact the MoM if they have a complaint about their sponsor or working conditions. The MoM distributes the brochure to source country embassies and provides new workers with the brochures at airports, recruitment agencies and in their places of work.

1B. Does the government monitor immigration and emigration patterns for evidence of trafficking? Do law enforcement agencies screen for potential trafficking victims along borders?

--The government has not yet established a formal procedure to monitor immigration and emigration patterns for victims of trafficking in persons. However, the ROP interviews every departing worker at the airport; if the

MUSCAT 00000253 009.2 OF 009

worker has an unresolved complaint against his or her sponsor, such as unpaid or withheld wages, the immigration official will refer the worker to the MoM for further investigation of the complaint. In order to capture data from these kinds of interviews, officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) state that the government plans to begin working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to develop a central database for trafficking-related information in Oman.

1C. Is there a mechanism for coordination and communication between various agencies, internal, international, and multilateral on trafficking-related matters, such as a multi-agency working group or a task force?

--Oman's new anti-TIP law established a national anti-trafficking committee headed by an official of ministerial rank. The committee will include officials at the rank of Undersecretary or similar level from the ministries of Manpower, Justice, Social Development, Health, Finance, and Legal Affairs, as well as from the Royal Oman Police (ROP) and the Public Prosecutor. Once established, the committee will assume responsibility for: creating a comprehensive program to combat TIP; researching TIP and its manifestations; conducting public awareness campaigns; coordinating with government ministries, law enforcement, civil society and international organizations; establishing a data base of related international legislation and studies on methods of trafficking and traffickers; setting up rehabilitation services for victims; creating rules and regulations to enhance border control and supervision; drafting periodic reports on TIP; and organizing and conducting training.

1D. Does the government have a national plan of action to address trafficking in persons? If the plan was developed during the reporting period, which agencies were involved in developing it? Were NGOs consulted in the process? What steps has the government taken to implement the action plan?

--In article 23 of the anti-TIP law, the Committee to Combat Trafficking is tasked with setting up an action plan to combat trafficking. This

E: What measures has the government taken during the reporting period to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts?

--Oman has not conducted a public awareness campaign to reduce demand for commercial sex acts; however, sources indicate that Oman does not have a significant sex trafficking problem.

1F. Required of all Posts: What measures has the government taken during the reporting period to reduce the participation in international child sex tourism by nationals of the country?

--Post has no information indicating that Oman is either a source or destination country for child sex tourism.

1G. Required of posts in countries that have contributed over 100 troops to international peacekeeping efforts: What measures has the government adopted to ensure that its nationals who are deployed abroad as part of a peacekeeping or other similar mission do not engage in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking or exploit victims of such trafficking?

--Oman does not contribute troops to international peacekeeping efforts.

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